

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Background

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) is the agency responsible for the management of inland fisheries, wildlife and recreational boating for the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Department employs 493 salaried staff and has a \$49.5 million annual budget.

The Department is supervised by the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries, which is composed of 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. The Board has supervisory authority over the agency and is provided with specific powers, duties and responsibilities. The Board selects and appoints the Executive Director of the agency, who is charged with the responsibility for hiring appropriate personnel and administering programs to accomplish the mission of the agency. The Executive Director serves at the will of the Board. For details about the Department's enabling legislation and programs, visit: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+TOC2901000>

Mission

- To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth;
- To provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation;
- To promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing.

Funding

Revenues for the agency are received from hunting and fishing license sales; boat registrations; the boat sales tax; sales tax generated from the sale of hunting, fishing and wildlife watching equipment; and grants primarily from the federal government. The programs of the agency are funded by the revenue that can be generated to support them. The revenue generated is a direct result of participation in the recreational activities supported by the agency.

Public surveys conducted over the last decade clearly indicate that there is no public expectation for any existing program to be de-emphasized. The general expectation is for existing programs to expand and for new programs to develop and expand to meet the public expectation. Because of the special fund status of the agency, funding sources typically drive resource allocation.